

## 'Back To Life...'

*Editor's Note: The following is the third of a series profiling the Black Greek organizations.*

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Four years ago, when SMSgt. Thomas E. Johnson, was off fighting in Saudi Arabia, he not only received mail and care packages from his family, but also from total strangers—the University's Kappa Omicron Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

This act by the young ladies, not only moved Johnson and his troop, but also his daughter, Sherrie Johnson, who was then a freshman at UNC.

"That really impressed me when they did that," said Johnson. "I thought, 'this is something that I would like to be a part of.'

Today, no longer dreaming, Johnson is apart of 'this something.' She is one of the 50 newly inducted members of the KO chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

"It's been great. I'm really glad that I did it," said Johnson, a senior journalism major. "It has opened a lot of new doors and created new friendships."

### History

Founded on January 13, 1913 on the campus of the historically black Howard University, DST is a non-profit public service organization dedicated to providing service and programs that promote the welfare of the community. Delta accomplishes these goals through national programs such as May Week, School America and Jabberwock, a scholarship program that assists promising high school women.

Carried out by the the organization's members, who number more than 100,000 and its chapters, the programs also stress Delta's commitment to educational excellence, economic development and physical and mental health. The organization has over 750 nationwide and international chapters located in countries such as West Germany, Haiti and Liberia.

"Delta Sigma Theta embodies the ideal of sisterhood and scholarship," said Casella Foster,

a sophomore journalism major from Sterling, Va., and sorority member.

Maleikka Hardy, a senior

"The purpose of these programs is to promote education among the African-American community and on campus,"

go over was in Spring 1991. But on Dec. 5, 1993, Delta Sigma Theta proved the doubters wrong.

a probate show.

"I think it was basically a culmination of a goal I had worked toward," said Witherspoon, a math major from Wilson. "Having wanted to be a Delta for a while, I finally had a chance to work for Delta."

But more importantly, Witherspoon said, the members were "trying to emphasize that we were back, ready to work and ready to play an integral role on campus."

"For all of us, Kappa Omicron is very important," Witherspoon said. "It was important to continue its projects and its relations with the community."

Although having 50 members can sometimes be problematic and chaotic when trying to get things done, it is also an asset, members say.

"We can act as a bigger force on campus," Witherspoon said.

For Hardy, the hardest thing about being a Delta hasn't been the number of sorors she has within the organization, but rather, living up to Delta.

"I try to be the quintessential Delta," she said.

Fellow sorority member, senior Millicent Blair of Charlotte, said that in reality, "being the quintessential Delta is a plateau that we will probably



Famous Deltas include Lena Horne, Dr. Betrice Berry...

journalism major from Charlotte and the reigning Miss BSM and Homecoming Queen, said she joined Delta because "when I came to Carolina, they exemplified the things that I strive for in myself."

"They were intelligent, strong black women who were committed to their community and to campus," Hardy said. "Delta was the only thing for me."

Since it was first chartered in 1973, the University's Kappa Omicron chapter of DST, has continued to emphasize the ideals of Delta's 22 founders. It has done this through various University and community outreach programs. Some of these programs include sponsoring a talent show, Delta Star Search; a scholarship program; and the MLK Oratorical contest.

Recently, DST members volunteered at the Rape Crisis Center hotline; sponsored an AIDS awareness workshop and a forum on the housekeepers' movement. Also, living up to its motto, "Intelligence is the torch of wisdom," the sorority will also honor the freshman female with the highest grade point average.

Johnson said. "We try to have service projects that we think would be helpful to the community and the students."

### '...Back to Reality'

Prior to last fall, some prob-

Stepping onto the basketball court behind Morrison Residence Hall dressed in red and black, the sorority's new members were, as the song goes, "Back to life. Back to reality."



... Jocelyn Elders and Paula Giddings.

ably thought the organization was extinct, since the last line to

For junior Darice Witherspoon, it was more than

never reach, but it gives us something to always strive for."